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# The San Francisco Examiner

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia
(Redirected from San Francisco Examiner)

***The San Francisco Examiner*** is a free daily newspaper distributed in and around San Francisco, California. The *Examiner* has been published continuously since the late 19th century.

The longtime "Monarch of the Dailies" and flagship of the Hearst Corporation chain, the *Examiner* converted to free distribution early in the 21st century and is now independently owned by the San Francisco Newspaper Company LLC.

**San Francisco Examiner**

| | |
|---|---|
| **Type** | Free daily newspaper |
| **Format** | Tabloid |
| **Owner(s)** | San Francisco Newspaper Company LLC |
| **Publisher** | Todd Vogt |
| **Editor** | Mike Billings |
| **Founded** | 1863, as *Democratic Press* |
| **Headquarters** | 225 Bush Street<br>San Francisco, California<br>94104 |
| **Circulation** | 75,009 MTWW;<br>190,088 Thursday<br>101,369 Friday<br>255,527 Sunday<br>[1] |
| **Official website** | www.sfexaminer.com |

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## History [edit]

### 19th century [edit]

The *Examiner* was founded in 1863 as the *Democratic Press*, a pro-Confederacy, pro-slavery paper opposed to Abraham Lincoln, but after his assassination in 1865 the paper's offices were destroyed by a mob, and starting on June 12, 1865 it was called the *Daily Examiner*.[1][2][3]

#### Hearst acquisition [edit]

In 1880, mining engineer and entrepreneur George Hearst bought the *Examiner*. Seven years later, after being elected to the U.S. Senate, he gave it to his son, William Randolph Hearst, who was then 23 years old. The elder Hearst "was said to have received the failing paper as partial payment of a poker debt."[4]

William Randolph Hearst hired S.S. (Sam) Chamberlain, who had started the first American newspaper in Paris, as managing editor[3] and Arthur McEwen as editor, and changed the *Examiner* from an evening to a morning paper.[1] Under him, the paper's popularity increased greatly, with the help of such writers as Ambrose Bierce, Mark Twain, and the San Francisco-born Jack London,[5] and also through the *Examiner*'s version of yellow journalism, with ample use of foreign correspondents and splashy coverage of scandals such as two entire pages of cables from Vienna about the Mayerling Incident;[3] satire; and patriotic enthusiasm for the Spanish–American War and the 1898 annexation of the Philippines.

### 20th century [edit]

William Randolph Hearst created the masthead with the "Hearst Eagle" and the slogan *Monarch of the Dailies.*

*San Francisco Examiner* front page, February 26, 1942

After the great earthquake and fire of 1906 destroyed much of San Francisco, the *Examiner* and its rivals — the *San Francisco Chronicle* and the *San Francisco Call* — brought out a joint edition. The *Examiner* offices were destroyed on April 18, 1906,[6] but when the city was rebuilt, a new structure, the Hearst Building, arose in its place at Third and Market streets. It opened in 1909, and in 1937 the facade, entranceway and lobby underwent an extensive remodeling designed by architect Julia Morgan.[7]

Through the middle third of the twentieth century, the *Examiner* was one of

several dailies competing for the city's and the Bay Area's readership; the San Francisco *News*, the San Francisco *Call-Bulletin*, and the *Chronicle* all claimed significant circulation, but ultimately attrition left the *Examiner* one chief rival — the *Chronicle*. Strident competition prevailed between the two papers in the 1950s and 1960s; the *Examiner* boasted, among other writers, such columnists as veteran sportswriter Prescott Sullivan, the popular Herb Caen, who took an eight-year hiatus from the *Chronicle* (1950–1958), and Kenneth Rexroth, one of the best-known men of California letters and a leading San Francisco Renaissance poet, who contributed weekly impressions of the city from 1960 to 1967. Ultimately circulation battles ended in a merging of resources between the two papers.

For 35 years starting in 1965, the *San Francisco Chronicle and Examiner* operated under a Joint Operating Agreement whereby the *Chronicle* published a morning paper and the *Examiner* published in the afternoon. The *Examiner* published the Sunday paper's news sections and glossy magazine, and the *Chronicle* contributed the features. Circulation was approximately 100,000 on weekdays and 500,000 on Sundays. By 1995, discussion was already brewing in print media about the possible shuttering of the *Examiner* due to low circulation and an extremely disadvantageous revenue sharing agreement for the *Chronicle*.[8]

### 21st century [edit]

#### Fang acquisition [edit]

*The Examiner*

When the Chronicle Publishing Company divested its interests, the Hearst Corporation purchased the *Chronicle*. To satisfy antitrust concerns, Hearst sold the *Examiner* to Exln, LLC, a corporation owned by the politically connected Fang family, publishers of the *San Francisco Independent* and the *San Mateo Independent*.[9] San Francisco political consultant Clint Reilly filed a lawsuit against Hearst, charging that the deal did not ensure two competitive newspapers and was instead a sweetheart deal designed to curry approval. However, on July 27, 2000 a federal judge approved the Fangs' assumption of the *Examiner* name, its archives, 35 delivery trucks, and a subsidy of $66 million, to be paid over three years.[10]

On February 24, 2003, the *Examiner* became a free daily newspaper and is now printed Sunday through Friday.

#### Anschutz acquisition [edit]

On February 19, 2004, the Fang family sold the *Examiner* and its printing plant, together with the two *Independent* newspapers, to Philip Anschutz of Denver, Colorado.[9] His new company, Clarity Media Group, launched *The Washington Examiner* in 2005 and published *The Baltimore Examiner* 2006-2009. In 2006, Anschutz donated the archives of the *Examiner* to the University of California, Berkeley Bancroft Library, the largest gift ever to the library.[11]

Under Clarity ownership, the *Examiner* pioneered a new business model[12] for the newspaper industry. Designed to be read quickly, the *Examiner* is presented in a compact, tabloid size without story jumps. It focuses on local news, business, entertainment and sports with an emphasis on content relevant to local readers. It is delivered free to select neighborhoods in San Francisco and San Mateo counties, and to single-copy outlets throughout San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Alameda counties, California.

By February 2008, the company had transformed the newspaper's examiner.com domain into a national hyperlocal brand with local websites throughout the United States.[13]

#### Independent ownership [edit]

Clarity Media sold the *Examiner* to San Francisco Newspaper Company LLC in 2011. The company's investors include President and Publisher Todd Vogt, Chief Financial Officer Pat Brown, and David Holmes Black.[*citation needed*] Early, incorrect media reports stated that the paper was purchased by Black's company Black Press.[14]

## Editions [edit]

In the early 20th century, an edition of the *Examiner* circulated in the East Bay under the *Oakland Examiner* masthead. Into the late 20th century, the paper circulated well beyond San Francisco. In 1982, for example, the *Examiner*'s zoned weekly supplements within the paper were titled "City, "Peninsula," "Marin/Sonoma" and "East Bay."

## See also [edit]

- San Francisco Chronicle
- The Washington Examiner
- C.H. Garrigues, jazz columnist
- San Francisco newspaper strike of 1994

***San Francisco Bay Area portal***

***Journalism portal***

## References [edit]


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## External links [edit]

- *San Francisco Examiner* website
- Guide to the Fang Family *San Francisco Examiner* photograph archive, circa 1930-2000 , at The Bancroft Library

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Categories: Newspapers published in the San Francisco Bay Area | Free daily newspapers | History of San Francisco, California | Newspapers published in California | Publications established in 1863 | The San Francisco Examiner | 1863 establishments in California

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